

Popular Culture in the Roaring Twenties

What social trends and innovations shaped popular culture during the 1920s?

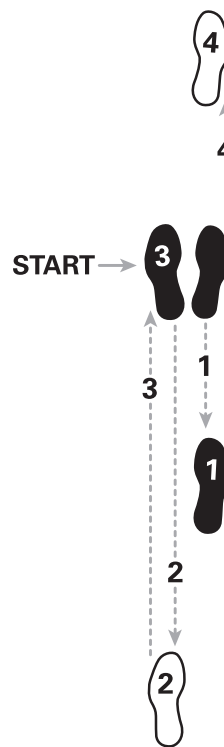
Key Content Terms

As you complete the Reading Notes, use these Key Content Terms in your answers:

Charleston	equal rights
Roaring Twenties	amendment (ERA)
League of Women	Jazz Age
Voters	Harlem Renaissance
	Lost Generation

PREVIEW

Follow the steps below to learn how to dance the Charleston.



The Charleston has four basic steps with arm movements. Begin with your feet together.

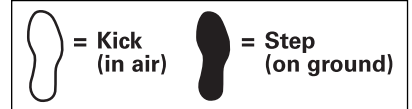
Hold your arms out to the sides with elbows bent and hands pointing up.

1. Step back with your right foot as you swing your arms out to the right.

2. Kick back with your left foot as you swing your arms to the left.

3. Step forward with your left foot as you swing your arms to the right.

4. Kick forward with your right foot as you swing your arms to the left.



READING NOTES

Follow the directions on Notebook Handout 28 to record notes on the influential historical figures and the major trends in American popular culture during the 1920s. After the activity, tape your Notebook Handout in your notebook.

PROCESSING

Using pictures, magazine clippings, or drawings, create a visual collage showing how the popular trends of the 1920s have influenced your life today. Use at least five trends from the chapter. For each, write a sentence or two that compares the 1920s' trend with a similar trend from today.

For example, you might include a picture of your family car and provide this comparison: *In the 1920s, the simple Model T was mass produced so that most families could afford to buy one. All Model T's were exactly the same. Today, we have many makes and models of cars to purchase, and some are much more expensive than others.*

Roaring Twenties Guest List

Use the Fun Facts to figure out which celebrity you are talking to. For each celebrity you meet at the Roaring Twenties party, note at least one accomplishment and at least one way his or her trend shaped popular culture in the 1920s.

1920s' Celebrity and Trend	Fun Facts	Accomplishments	How Trend Shaped Popular Culture in the 1920s
Bruce Barton Consumerism (Section 28.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I began my business career selling newspapers. I created the character Betty Crocker for an ad campaign. 		
George Washington Carver Consumerism (Section 28.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When working in the laboratory, I often wore a white apron. I was given the nickname "the Plant Doctor." 		
Charles Lindbergh Transportation (Section 28.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I dropped out of the University of Wisconsin to become a barnstormer. On my transatlantic flight, I brought only five sandwiches with me. 		
Amelia Earhart Transportation (Section 28.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On my cold flight across the Pacific, I brought a container of hot chocolate. While flying, I usually wore dresses or suits and a scarf and goggles. 		
Henry Ford Transportation (Section 28.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first car I invented used bicycle tires. I built and drove race cars early in my career. 		

1920s' Celebrity and Trend	Fun Facts	Accomplishments	How Trend Shaped Popular Culture in the 1920s
David Sarnoff Mass Media (Section 28.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People called me “the General.” • I predicted the invention of both color television and the videocassette recorder. 		
Charlie Chaplin Mass Media (Section 28.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my films, I often wore a bowler hat, a dusty suit, and a black mustache. • I continued to make silent films even after “talkies” had become popular. 		
Alice Paul Women's Rights (Section 28.5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In college, I played field hockey, basketball, and tennis. • I chained myself to the White House fence while protesting for women's suffrage. 		
Margaret Sanger Women's Rights (Section 28.5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After being arrested, I jumped bail and fled to England for two years. • I started <i>The Woman Rebel</i>, a radically feminist paper. 		
Louis Armstrong The Jazz Age (Section 28.6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I often wore a suit while playing the trumpet. • Because I toured world-wide, I earned the nickname “Ambassador Satch.” 		
Bessie Smith The Jazz Age (Section 28.6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I often wore long evening gowns. • I sang blues songs that were emotional responses to everyday events. 		

1920s' Celebrity and Trend	Fun Facts	Accomplishments	How Trend Shaped Popular Culture in the 1920s
Langston Hughes Literature and Art (Section 28.7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am wearing a fedora hat on the "Black Heritage" U.S. postal stamp. • When I was younger, I was a messboy on ships and a cook in Paris. 		
F. Scott Fitzgerald Literature and Art (Section 28.7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a stunt, my wife Zelda and I bathed fully clothed in a New York City fountain. • I once decorated my room with 122 rejection slips from publishers. 		
Georgia O'Keeffe Literature and Art (Section 28.7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I lived most of my life in New York and New Mexico. • I am considered Kappa Delta sorority's most famous alumna. 		
Jim Thorpe Sports Heroes (Section 28.8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Native American name, Wa-Tho-Huk, means "Bright Path." • In high school, I played football and ran track. 		
Gertrude Ederle Sports Heroes (Section 28.8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I had to coat myself with lanolin for my swim across the English Channel. • I eventually became deaf. 		

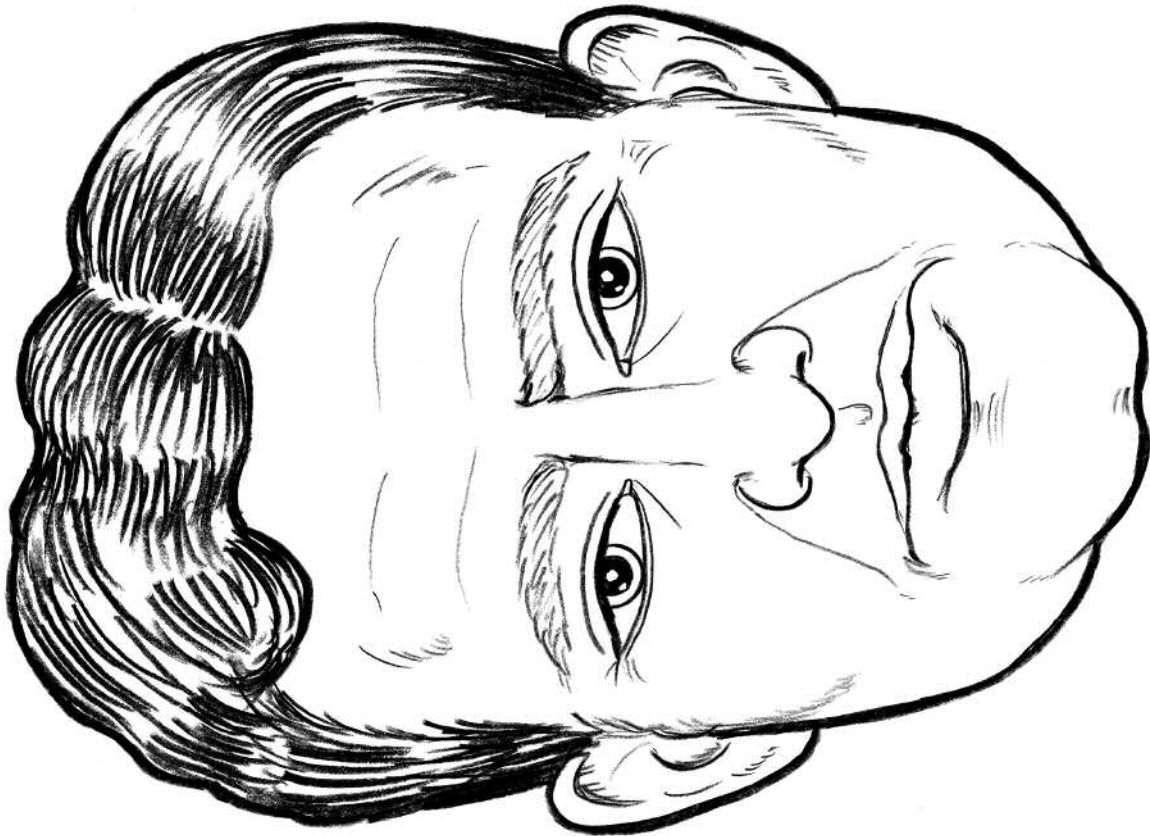
Bruce Barton

Fun Facts

- I began my business career selling newspapers.
- I wrote a bestselling book, *The Man Nobody Knows*, in which I depicted Jesus Christ as a successful salesman and publicist who could serve as a role model for modern businessmen.
- As part of an ad campaign, I created the character Betty Crocker.

Bruce Barton was an enterprising young boy. He started by selling newspapers. At the age of 16, he was making more than \$600 a year selling his uncle's maple syrup. He got his start in advertising by selling ad space for *Collier's* magazine. In 1919, he cofounded the advertising firm that would become Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn. His agency's main clients included General Electric, General Motors, and U.S. Steel. Barton grew to be one of the most successful advertising executives of the 1920s.

Barton's philosophy was that good advertising appealed to consumers and created desire for a product. According to Barton, "The American conception of advertising is to arouse desires and stimulate wants, to make people dissatisfied with the old and out-of-date." Barton told his employees that their ads should have a theme, an interesting headline, and a purpose to direct consumers to act in a particular way (usually to buy a product). His ads often used catchy slogans. His advertising firm was also one of the first agencies to use radio, rather than newspapers and magazines, for advertising.



George Washington Carver

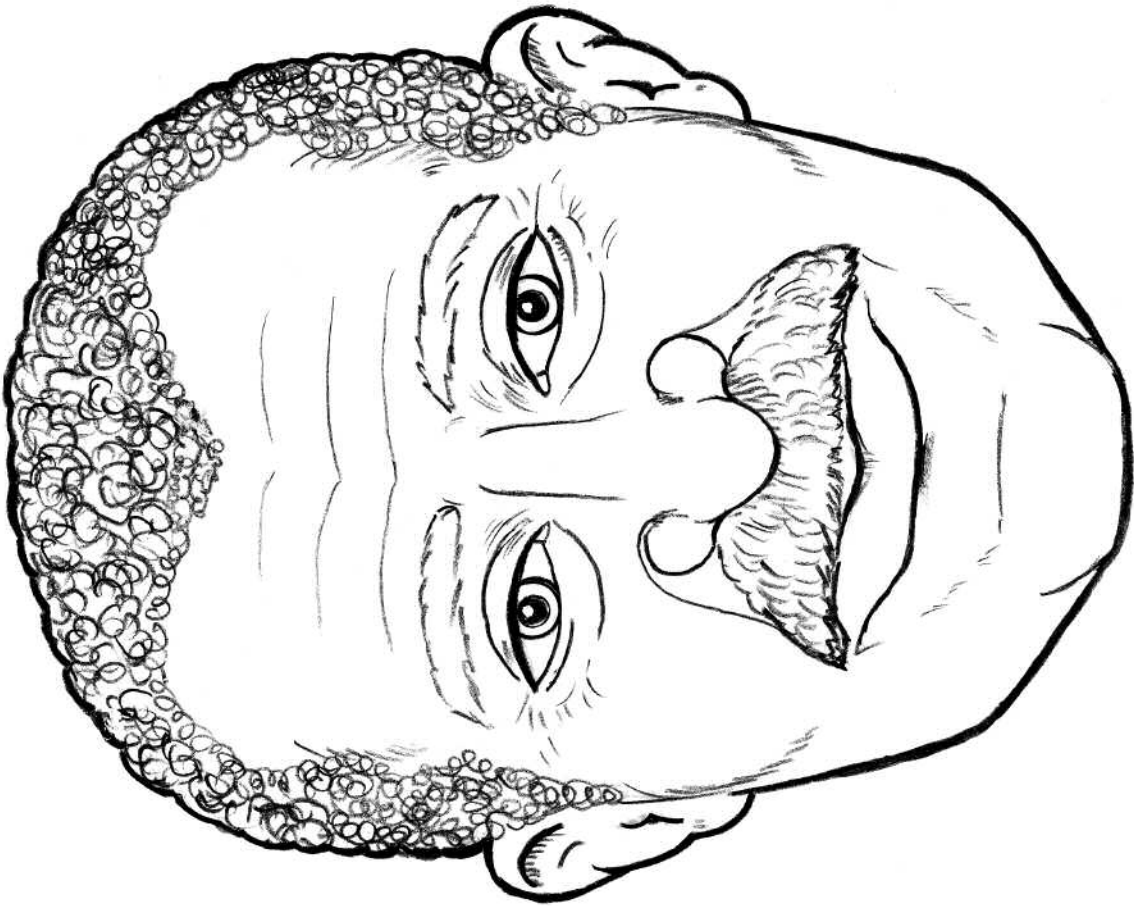
Fun Facts

- When working in the laboratory, I often wore a white apron.
- I discovered more than 300 uses for peanuts.
- Because of my love for nature, I was given the nickname “the Plant Doctor.”

George Washington Carver was born into slavery in Missouri. He learned a great deal about plants while wandering the fields of the plantation. Carver earned his master’s degree at Iowa State, where he was the first black student and, later, the first black faculty member.

In 1896, he became a researcher and professor at Tuskegee University in Alabama. There, he devised a crop rotation system to help poor Southern farmers. Part of the rotation included introducing peanuts, sweet potatoes, and soybeans, which added nitrogen to replenish the soil. To make these crops profitable, he invented new uses for them, such as turning them into dye, printer’s ink, glue, and molasses. He also developed more than 300 new uses for the peanut (though not peanut butter, as is commonly believed).

Numerous U.S. presidents, heads of foreign states, and business leaders met or studied with Carver. In 1943, after Carver’s death, President Franklin Roosevelt established a national monument for Carver, the first national monument dedicated to an African American.



Charles Lindbergh

Fun Facts

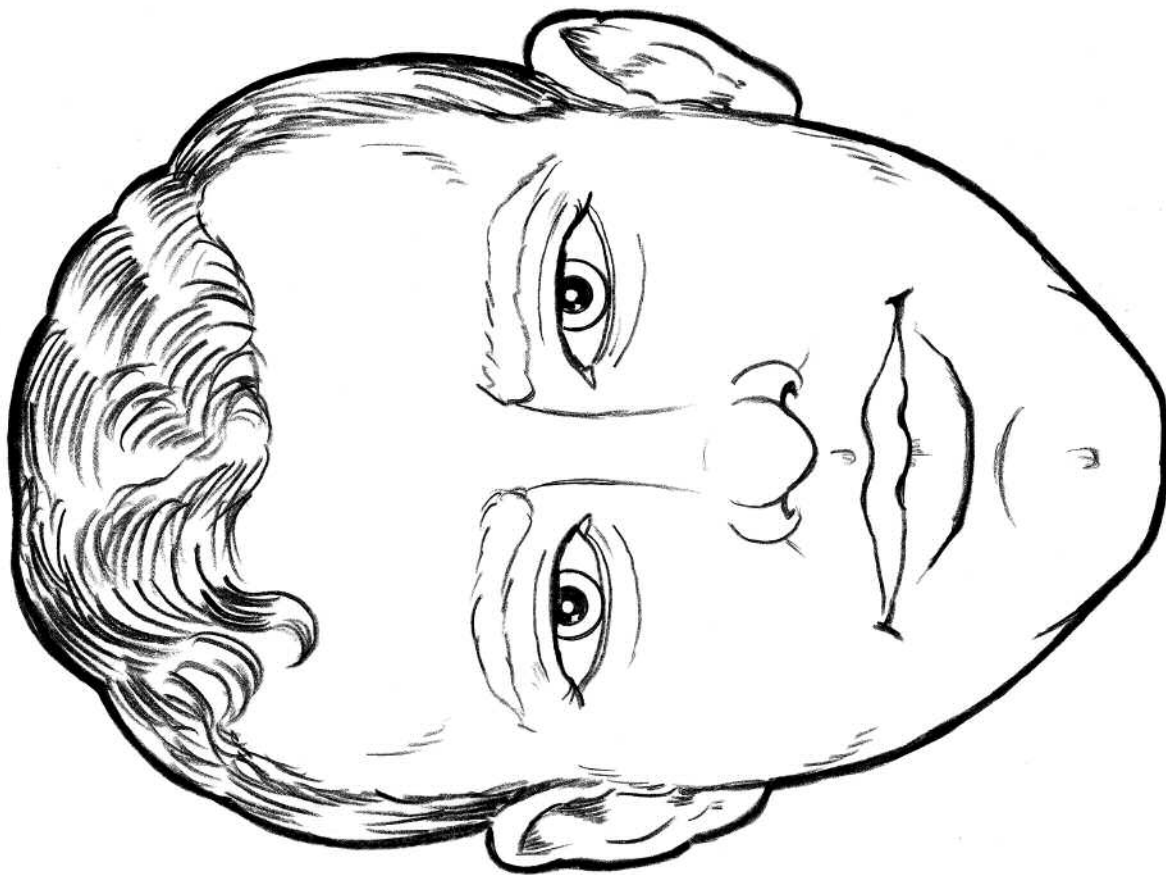
- I dropped out of the University of Wisconsin to become a barnstormer.
- On my transatlantic flight, I brought only five sandwiches with me.
- I received the largest ticker-tape parade in New York City's history.

Charles Lindbergh bought his first airplane in 1923 and worked as a barnstormer around the country. He earned many nicknames, the most famous of which was “Lucky Lindy.”

While working as an airmail pilot between Chicago and St. Louis, he decided to compete for a \$25,000 prize to be the first person to fly nonstop from New York City to Paris. On May 20, 1927, Lindbergh's plane, the *Spirit of St. Louis*, took off from Roosevelt Field in Long Island, New York, and landed 33½ hours later at Le Bourget Aerodrome in Paris.

After this heroic flight, Lindbergh was honored with awards, celebrations, and parades. President Calvin Coolidge gave Lindbergh the congressional Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Flying Cross. Lindbergh used his fame to promote the development of commercial aviation.

Despite the fame that surrounded them, the Lindberghs tried to lead a normal quiet life. However, tragedy struck on the evening of March 1, 1932, when their 20-month-old son was kidnapped from their home and murdered.



Amelia Earhart

Fun Facts

- To keep warm on my cold flight across the Pacific, I brought a container of hot chocolate.
- While flying, I often wore dresses or suits instead of typical flying gear. I also usually wore a scarf and goggles.
- The U.S. government spent \$4 million trying to find me after my disappearance.

Amelia Earhart's first flight, piloted by Frank Hawks, was the beginning of her dream to make her mark in aviation. "By the time I had got two or three hundred feet off the ground," she said, "I knew I had to fly." Odd jobs, borrowed money, and a strong desire to succeed pushed her closer to her dream.

In 1921, she received her pilot's license. In June 1928, she became the first woman to fly across the Atlantic as a passenger, making her a worldwide sensation. In 1932, she became the first woman to complete a solo transatlantic flight. Then, in 1935, she became the first person to fly solo across the Pacific Ocean, from Hawaii to California.

On June 1, 1937, Earhart set off on her 29,000-mile trip around the world. By June 29, when Earhart and her navigator, Fred Noonan, landed in Lae, New Guinea, all but 7,000 miles had been completed. On July 2, Earhart and Noonan disappeared. Their last report was received at 8:45 A.M. that day. The U.S. government reportedly spent \$4 million searching for them. At the time, it was the most expensive, intensive air-and-sea search in history.



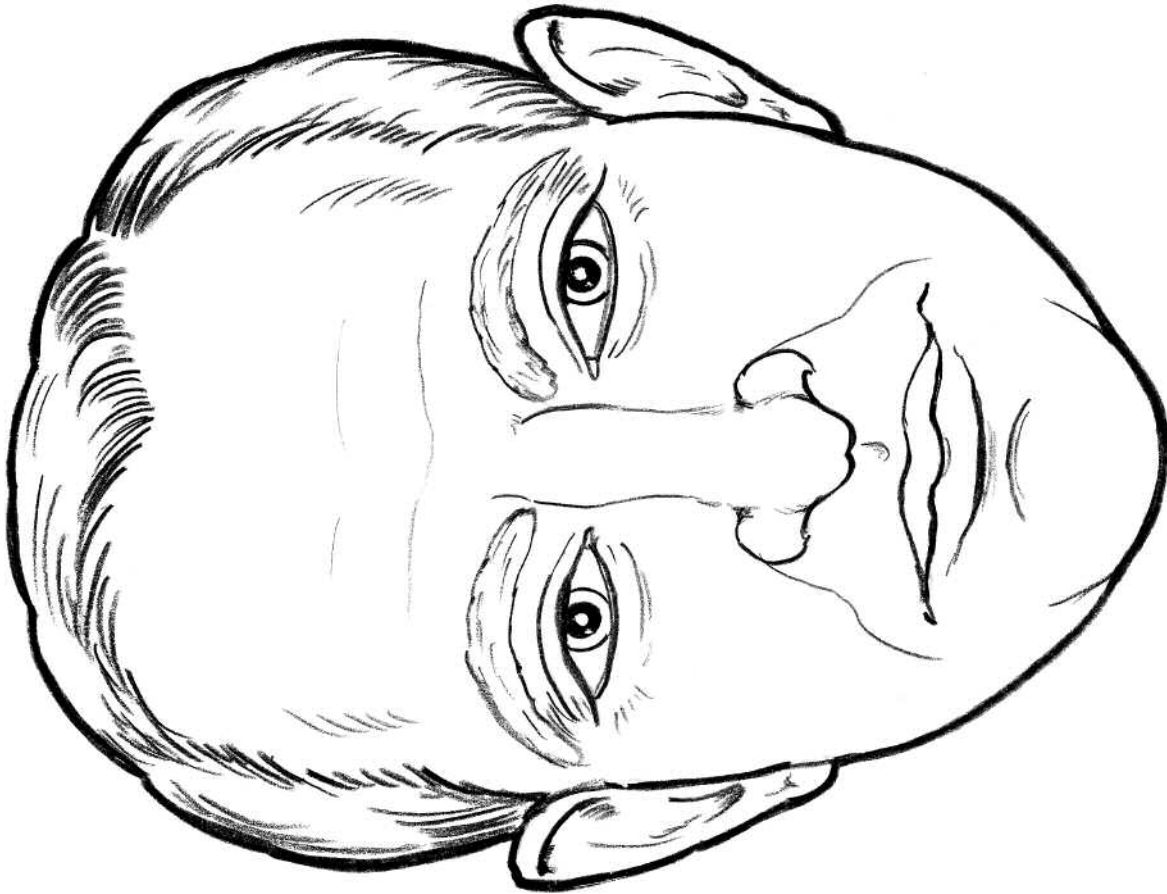
Henry Ford

Fun Facts

- The first car I invented used bicycle tires.
- I built and drove race cars early in my career.
- I ran, unsuccessfully, for Congress.

Henry Ford had a lifelong curiosity and fascination with machinery. As a young man, he held several jobs as a mechanic and accepted apprenticeships with car manufacturing companies. In 1896, he built his first experimental car, called the Quadricycle. It ran on bicycle tires and weighed only 500 pounds. In 1903, he started the Ford Motor Company, where he applied the principals of an assembly line to the production of automobiles. Each car was exactly the same, including the color: black.

This mass production of automobiles allowed his cars to be produced at affordable prices. Before Ford's Model T, cars were produced individually and cost about \$2,000. The cost of a Model T was less than \$500, making it affordable for many more families. This helped make Americans more mobile and allowed for the growth of new industries, such as gas stations and motels, that served mobile Americans.



David Sarnoff

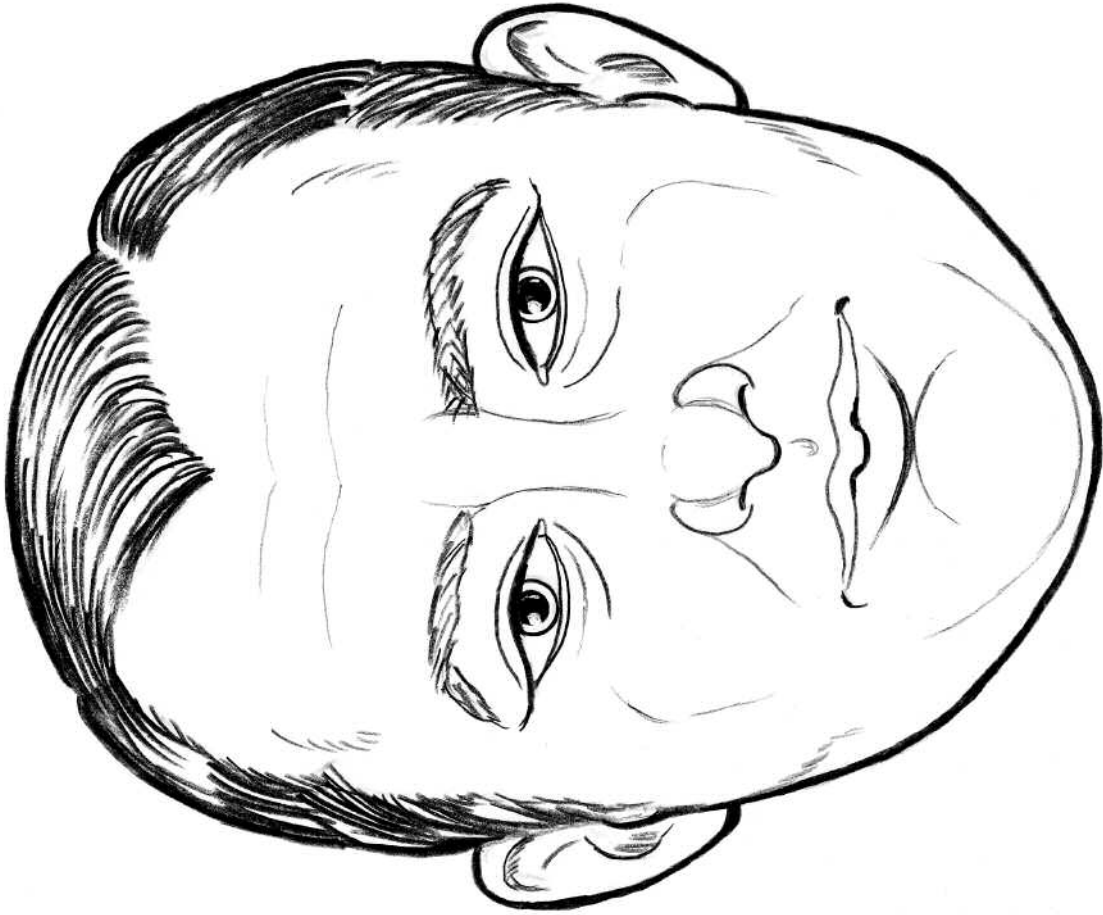
Fun Facts

- People called me “the General,” because I achieved that rank during World War II.
- I spent 72 hours relaying, by telegraph, the names of the survivors from the *Titanic*.
- I predicted the invention of both color television and the videocassette recorder.

David Sarnoff’s first taste of fame came from his job as a wireless telegraph operator in New York during the *Titanic* disaster. Sarnoff was one of the first to hear and report the incident. He spent 72 hours straight reporting the names of the survivors to relatives and the media.

Sarnoff quickly became a leader in the media industry, proposing new ideas and inventions, such as the “radio music box.” Until this time, radios were used primarily by the military for communication. Sarnoff predicted that radios would soon be used for entertainment purposes. In 1920, the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) hired Sarnoff to develop the idea. In 1921, he was promoted to general manager and then, in 1930, became president of the company. His vision and passion brought radio into the homes of many Americans. RCA sales rose considerably during his time there.

Sarnoff also pushed for the creation of the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) in 1926. In 1928, he cocreated the Radio-Keith-Orpheum (RKO) movie production company.



Charlie Chaplin

Fun Facts

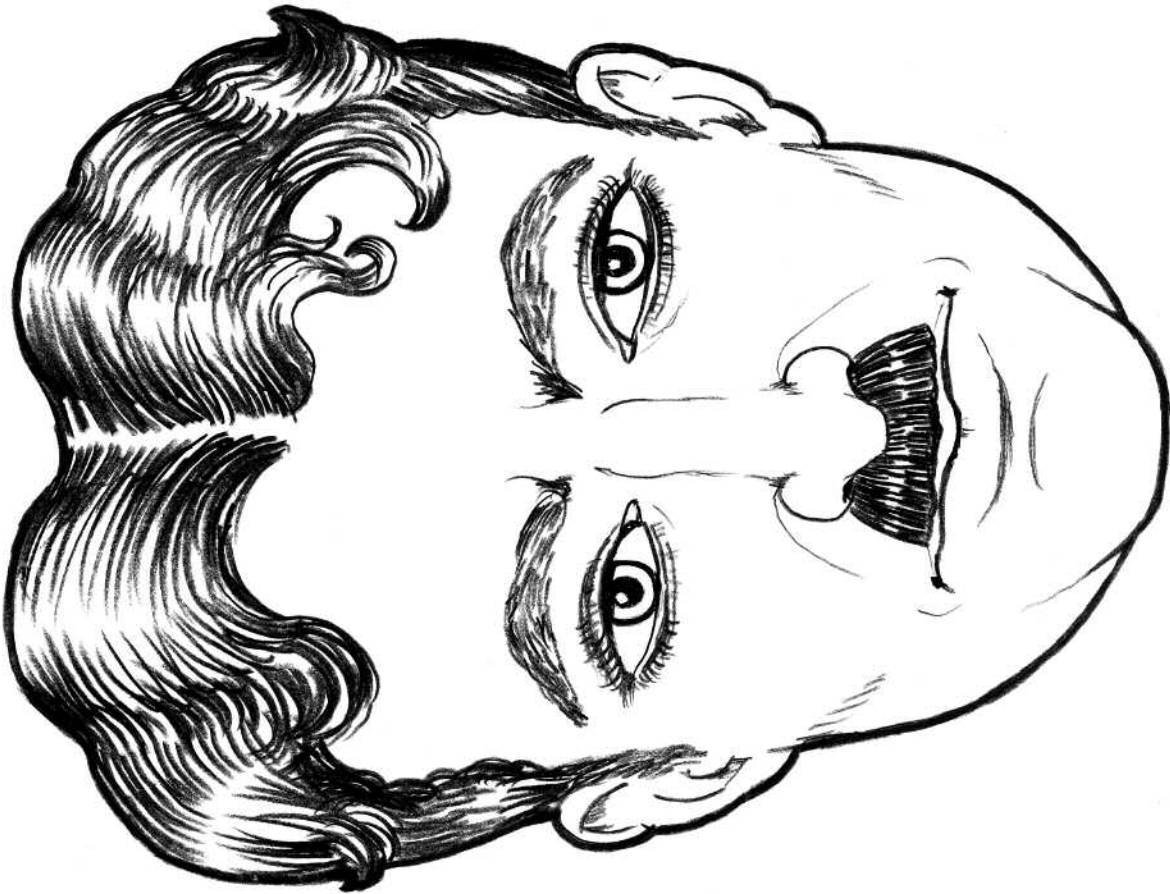
- In my films, I often wore a bowler hat, a dusty suit, and a small black mustache and carried a bamboo cane.
- I wrote, directed, and starred in most of my own films and even composed the music.
- I continued to make silent films even after “talkies” had become popular.

Charlie Chaplin spent much of his youth in London orphanages. At the age of 10, he left school to work in British vaudeville. In 1913, he joined Keystone Films in New York for \$150 a week. By 1916, he was earning \$10,000 a week, making him the highest-paid actor in the world at that time.

In 1914, he introduced the character that was to become his trademark: the Tramp. Charlie Chaplin summed up the Tramp’s popularity:

When his hopes, his dreams, his aspirations vanish, he only shrugs his shoulders and turns on his heel. It is rather a paradox to admit that this tragic mask has created more laughs than any other character on the screen or stage. This proves that laughter is very close to tears and vice versa.

Chaplin wrote, directed, and edited most of the films he appeared in. He made many of the funniest, most popular movies of his time. He was also one of the most popular silent film stars. By the end of his career, he owned his own studio and had cofounded United Artists, a motion picture production and distribution company. A 1995 worldwide survey of film critics named him the greatest actor in movie history.



Alice Paul

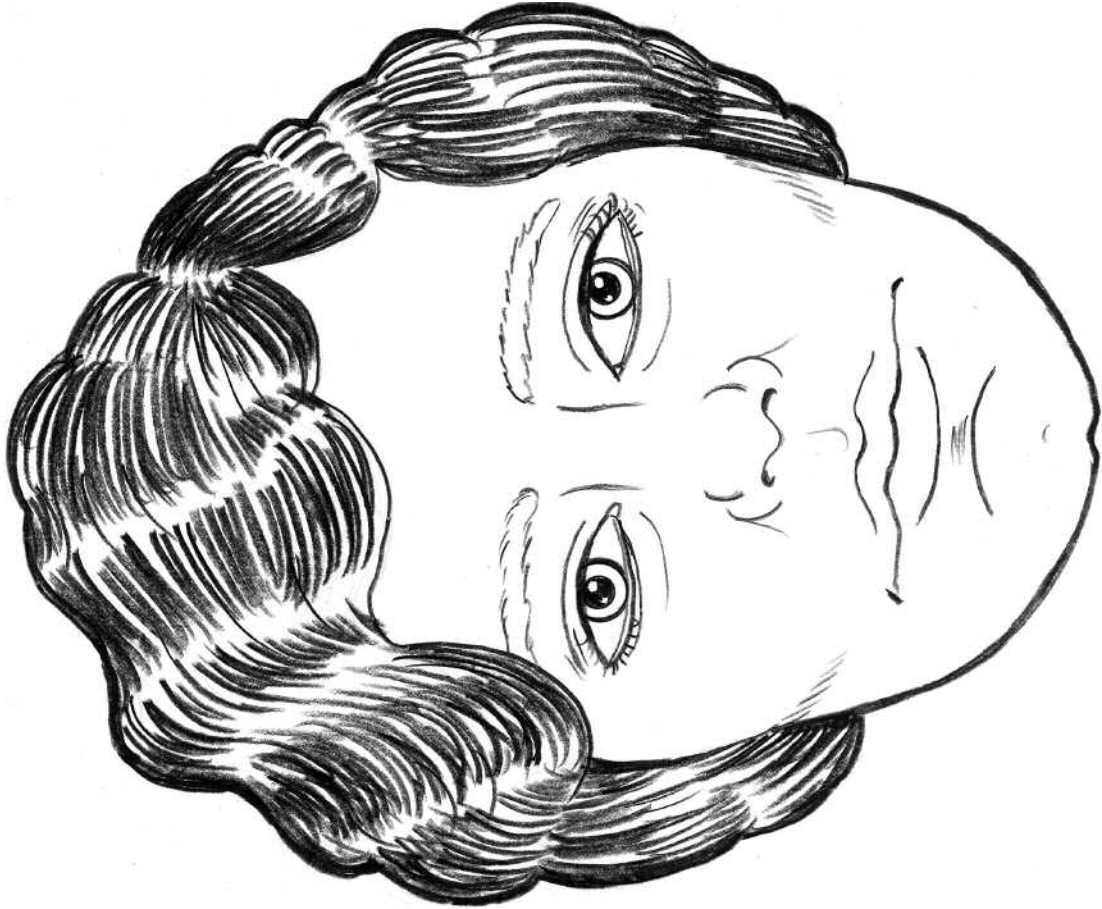
Fun Facts

- In college, I challenged traditional beliefs about women by participating in field hockey, tennis, and basketball.
- I chained myself to the White House fence once while protesting for women's suffrage.
- I fought for women's suffrage by going on hunger strikes.

Alice Stokes Paul was a highly educated woman with six college degrees. After hearing a British suffragette speaker in London, Paul was inspired to join the Women's Social and Political Union in the United States. Due to her activity in this organization, she was arrested and jailed three times. While in jail, she went on hunger strikes to protest women not having the right to vote.

Paul was a major organizer of the U.S. women's suffrage movement. She was also one of the leading figures responsible for passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. In 1923, Paul drafted the equal rights amendment (ERA) and presented it at the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the 1848 Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments. The amendment was a simple one, which stated, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex [gender]."

Paul never saw the ERA become law. Although it was introduced in every session of Congress between 1923 and 1970, it never made it to the floor for discussion until 1971. Although both houses of Congress approved it in 1972, it fell three states short of being ratified. It has since been reintroduced in every session of Congress since 1982.



Margaret Sanger

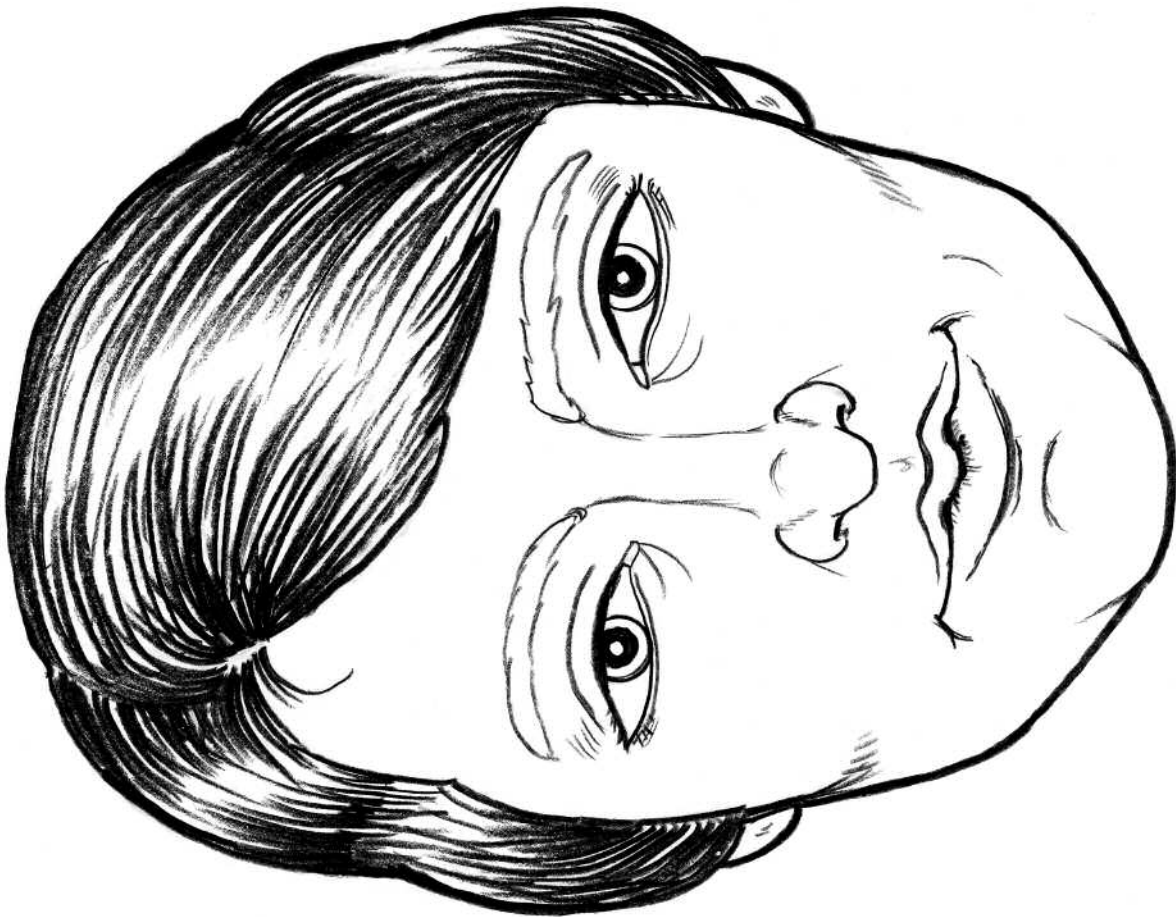
Fun Facts

- I was a trained nurse and worked for years in New York City.
- After being arrested in 1914, I jumped bail and fled to England for two years.
- I started *The Woman Rebel*, a radically feminist newspaper.

Margaret Sanger's mother, Anne Higgins, died from tuberculosis at the age of 50. Margaret was the sixth of 11 children, and she blamed her mother's early death on her frequent pregnancies. That belief was the driving force behind Sanger's great work on behalf of the women's birth control movement.

By 1914, Sanger was challenging laws that banned distribution of contraceptive information. In 1916, she opened the nation's first birth control clinic in Brooklyn, New York. After being in business only nine days, the clinic was raided. Sanger and her staff were put in jail. In 1923, Sanger opened the nation's first legal birth control clinic. She later formed a committee to lobby for birth control legislation granting physicians the right to distribute contraceptives legally.

Although she was considered wildly radical, her efforts and ideas paved the way for middle-class voices to be heard and for less costly, more effective contraceptives to become available. Her work led to the 1965 Supreme Court decision *Griswold v. Connecticut*, which made birth control legal for married couples—a right that was extended to unmarried people in 1972.



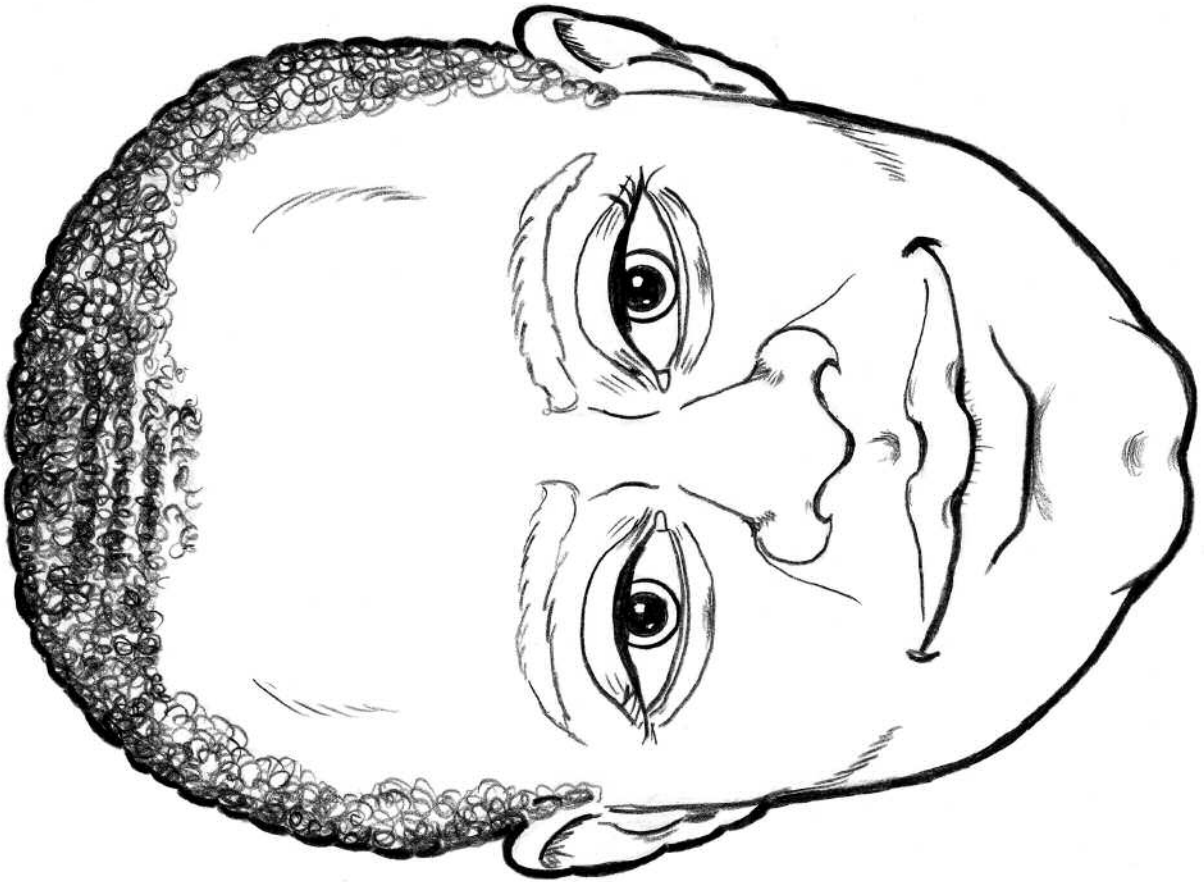
Louis Armstrong

Fun Facts

- I often wore a suit while playing the trumpet.
- Because I played more than 300 “gigs” a year and traveled worldwide, I earned the nickname “Ambassador Satch.”
- I helped write the first ever autobiography of a jazz musician, *Swing That Music*.

Jazz musician Louis Armstrong was born into extreme poverty in New Orleans. As a child, he would sing for pennies with other kids who wandered the New Orleans streets, trying to earn money for food. He taught himself to play the cornet, a brass instrument similar to a trumpet. He played in brass bands on steamboats traveling along the Mississippi River, often entertaining wealthy white audiences. As a young man, he traveled to Chicago and New York, playing with well-known band leaders. He later began recording his own music.

Armstrong first achieved fame as a cornet and trumpet player, and his improvisations were legendary. As his career progressed, his talent as a jazz vocalist became more important, and he is remembered for his gravelly voice and inspiring duets. Armstrong is often remembered for making jazz music widely popular to both white and black audiences.



Bessie Smith

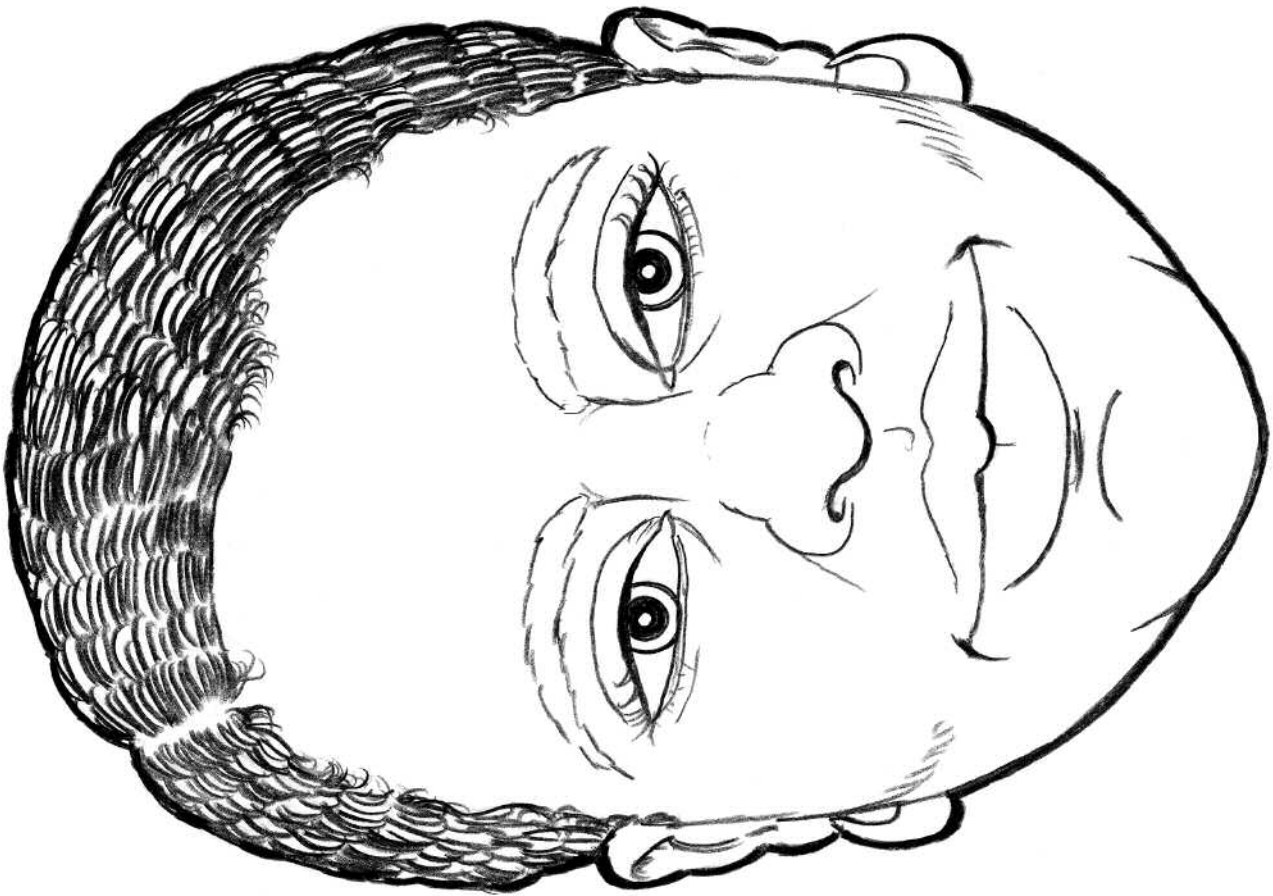
Fun Facts

- I often wore long evening gowns.
- The blues songs I sang were often emotional responses to everyday events.
- People often believe, rather incorrectly, that I bled to death after an auto accident because a white hospital refused to treat me on the basis of the color of my skin.

Bessie Smith is considered one of the most popular blues singers of all time. She was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and was orphaned by the time she was nine years old. In 1912, she was hired as a dancer in a famous traveling show.

By 1920, she had gained a reputation as a performer and had developed her own act in the vaudeville circuit, which included singing the blues. In the early 1920s, blues had become popular enough to sell records. Columbia Records signed Smith in 1923. Throughout the 1920s, she made and sold many recordings, often with other famous jazz musicians, like Louis Armstrong. Smith, known as the “Empress of the Blues,” was one of the biggest African American stars of the time. She toured and performed constantly, which also made her one of the highest paid musicians in the world, with a reported salary of more than \$2,000 a week.

Smith was popular with both blacks and whites. Her broad singing range, as well as the emotional intensity of her stage performances, served as inspiration to other musicians.



Langston Hughes

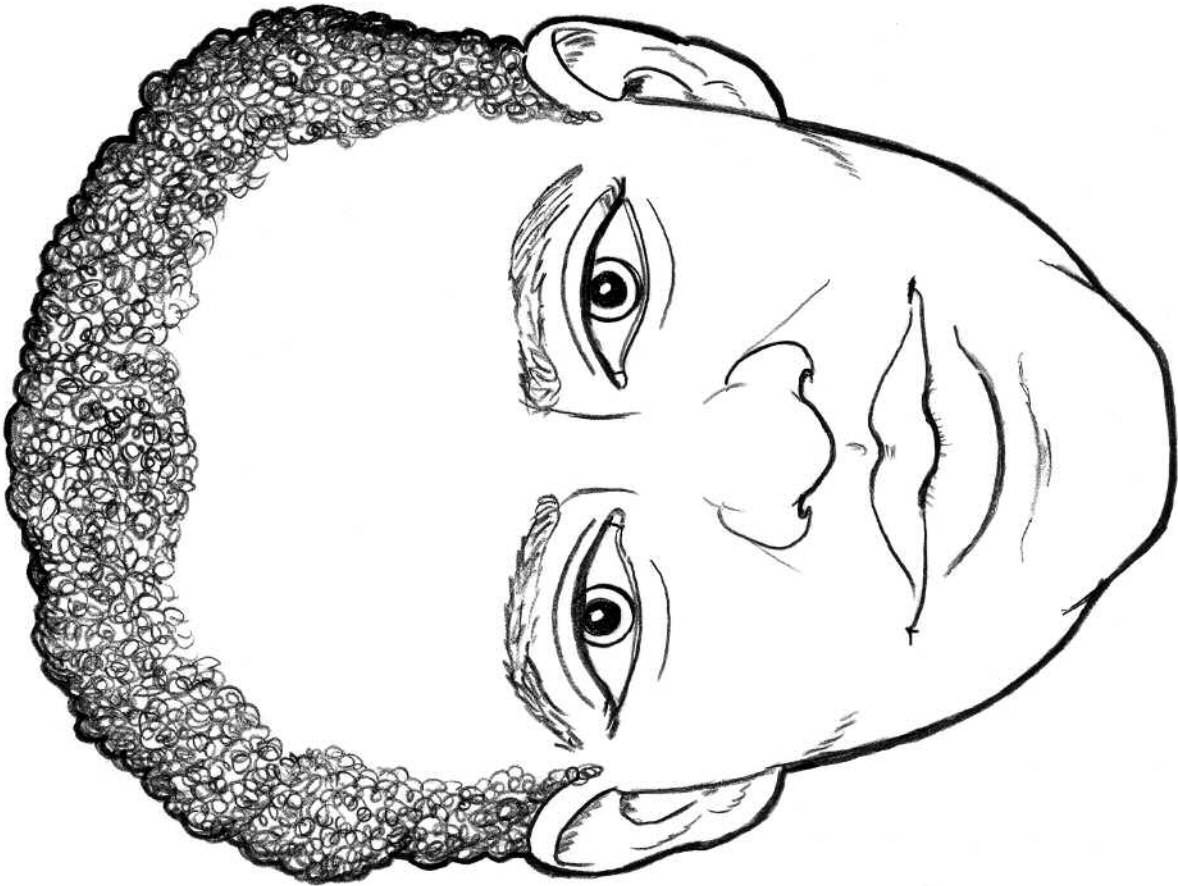
Fun Facts

- When I was younger, my jobs involved extensive travel, including serving as a messboy on ships and a cook at a Paris nightclub.
- I have been called the “poet laureate of the Negro race.”
- In my image on the “Black Heritage” U.S. postal stamp, I am featured wearing a fedora.

Langston Hughes was one of the most prolific poets and novelists of his time. He began writing poetry as a teenager and was a published poet before he entered college. His unhappy childhood and the racist tensions of the time served as inspiration for many of his poems.

In 1925, while working as a busboy in a Washington, D.C., hotel, he slipped three poems into the bag of Vachel Lindsay, a guest of the hotel. Lindsay was famous for public readings and performances of poetry. His rendition of Hughes’s poems led to an enthusiastic response from the public, as well as a scholarship for Hughes at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. By the time Hughes graduated, he had published two volumes of poetry and one of prose.

Hughes was very influential in the Harlem Renaissance. His poetry and fiction often centered on the lives of working-class black Americans, portraying their struggles and joys. Although he was and continues to be popular with both blacks and whites, Hughes has served as an inspiration to generations of African American writers and artists.



F. Scott Fitzgerald

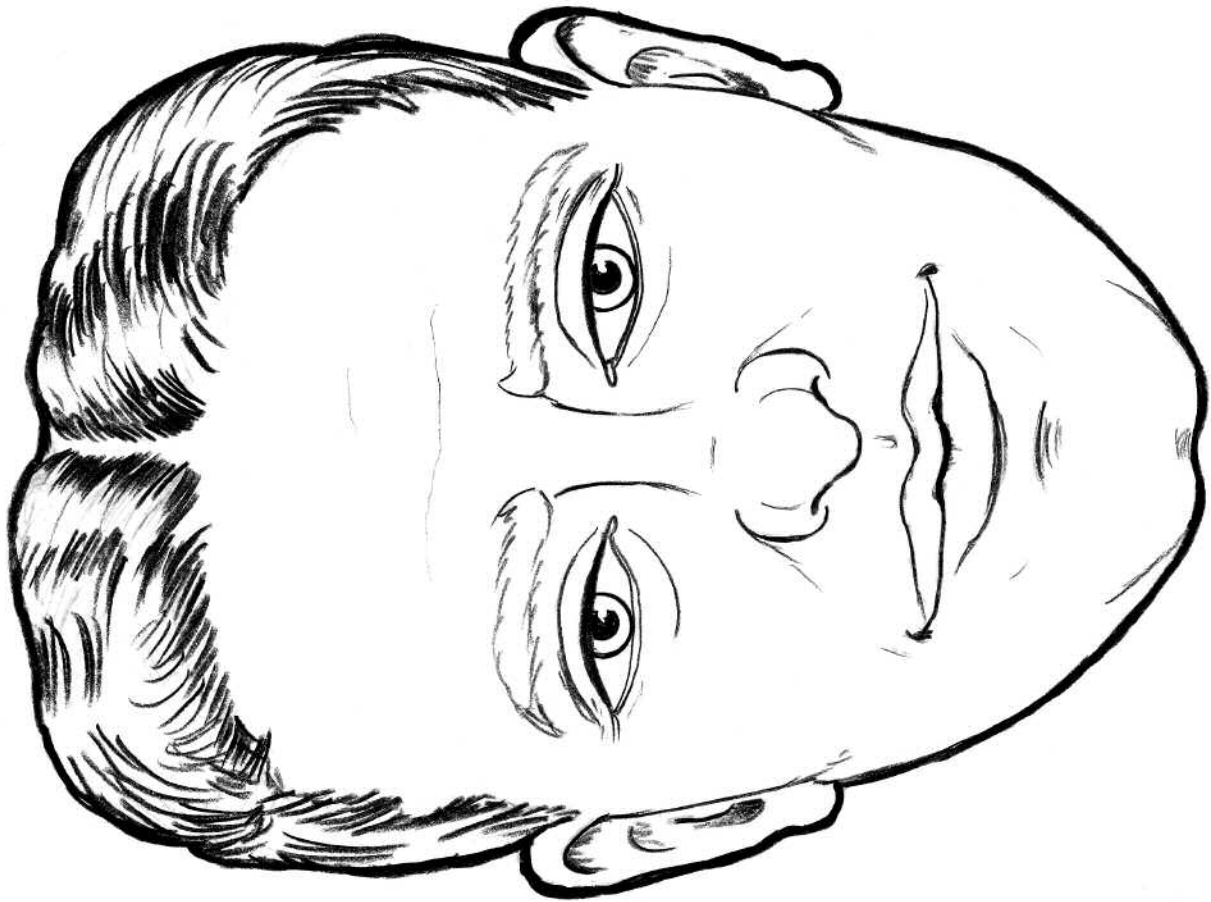
Fun Facts

- My wife Zelda and I often did wacky stunts, like bathing fully clothed in a New York City fountain.
- I once decorated my room with 122 rejection slips from publishers.
- My stories in *Tales of the Jazz Age* portrayed the wild youth and the lavish, partying lifestyle of the 1920s.

F. Scott Fitzgerald's success as a writer came at an early age. He began neglecting his studies while at Princeton in favor of writing. He then dropped out of college and enlisted in the army during World War I, although the war ended before he was to be sent overseas. He wrote his first novel during that time. *This Side of Paradise* was published and won him overnight fame and fortune.

His writing was primarily a social history of the Jazz Age. He wrote, "It was an age of miracles, it was an age of art, it was an age of excess, and it was an age of satire." His second novel, *The Beautiful and Damned*, was popular at the time. However, it was his third novel, *The Great Gatsby*, that secured him a place as one of America's most enduring writers.

Although Fitzgerald made a good living from his writing, he and his wife lived extravagantly, renting beautiful homes and partying and traveling extensively. By the mid-1930s, Fitzgerald was an alcoholic, in debt, and unable to write. Despite his enduring legacy, Fitzgerald died believing himself a failure.



Georgia O'Keeffe

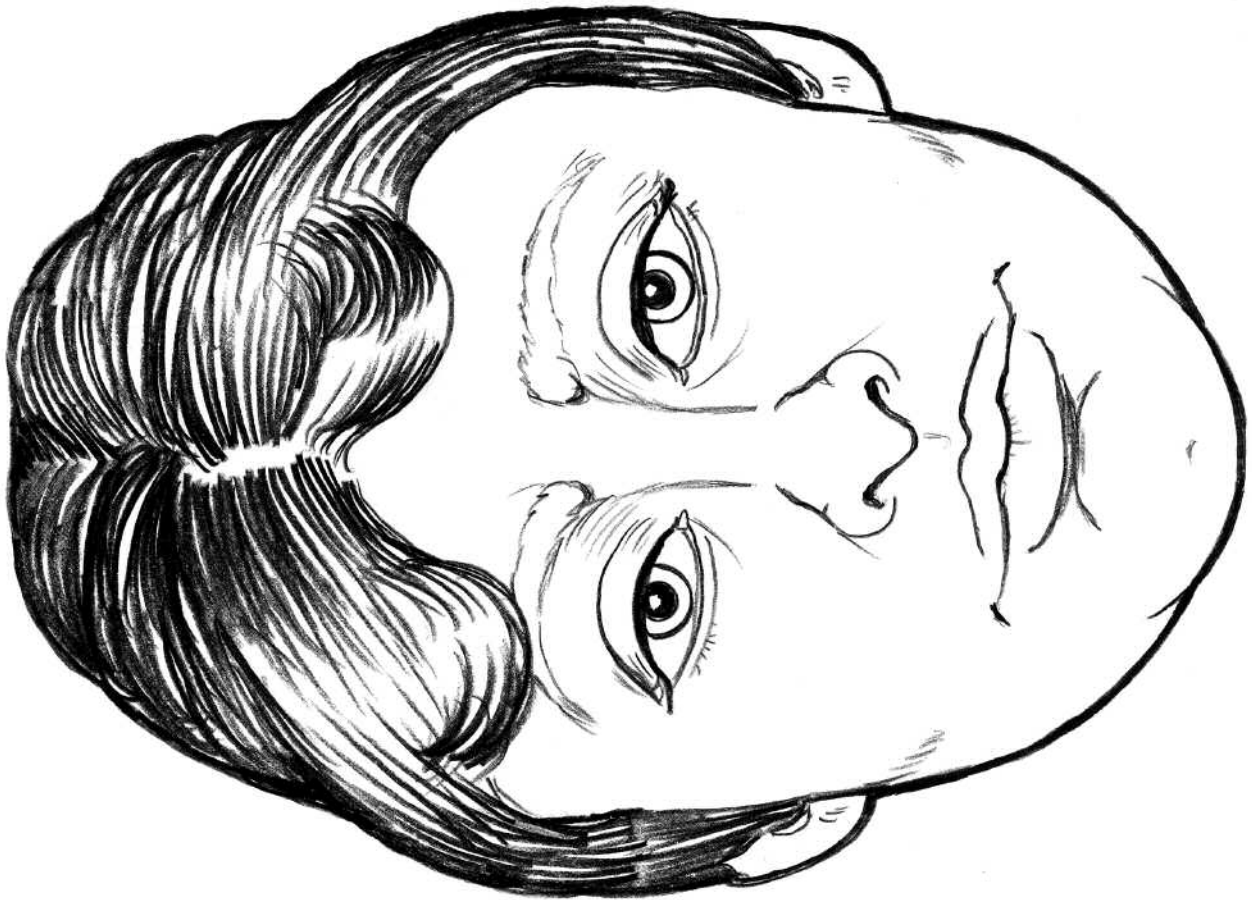
Fun Facts

- My bold paintings were often close-ups of flowers or parts of flowers.
- Though I was born in Wisconsin, I lived most of my life in New York and New Mexico.
- In college, I joined Kappa Delta sorority. I am now considered their most famous alumna.

One of the greatest artists of the 20th century, Georgia O'Keeffe's natural talent was recognized and encouraged early in her life. She studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Art Students League in New York. After initial success, she stopped painting, believing she could never achieve greatness working within the confines of traditional art. Four years later, after a summer course for art teachers that introduced her to a new method of approaching art, O'Keeffe began painting again, this time using more abstract methods.

In the mid-1920s, O'Keeffe began painting flowers up close. These have become her most famous works. Nature and the environment affected her work profoundly. Whether painting a flower, a skyscraper, or the southwestern horizon, she successfully used magnification and geometric patterns in her art. Her work is described as calm and mystical. It seems driven by emotion and passion.

O'Keeffe was heavily influenced by, and had an influence on, the modern art movement of the 1920s. She continued to produce art into her 90s and remains an inspiration to artists.



Jim Thorpe

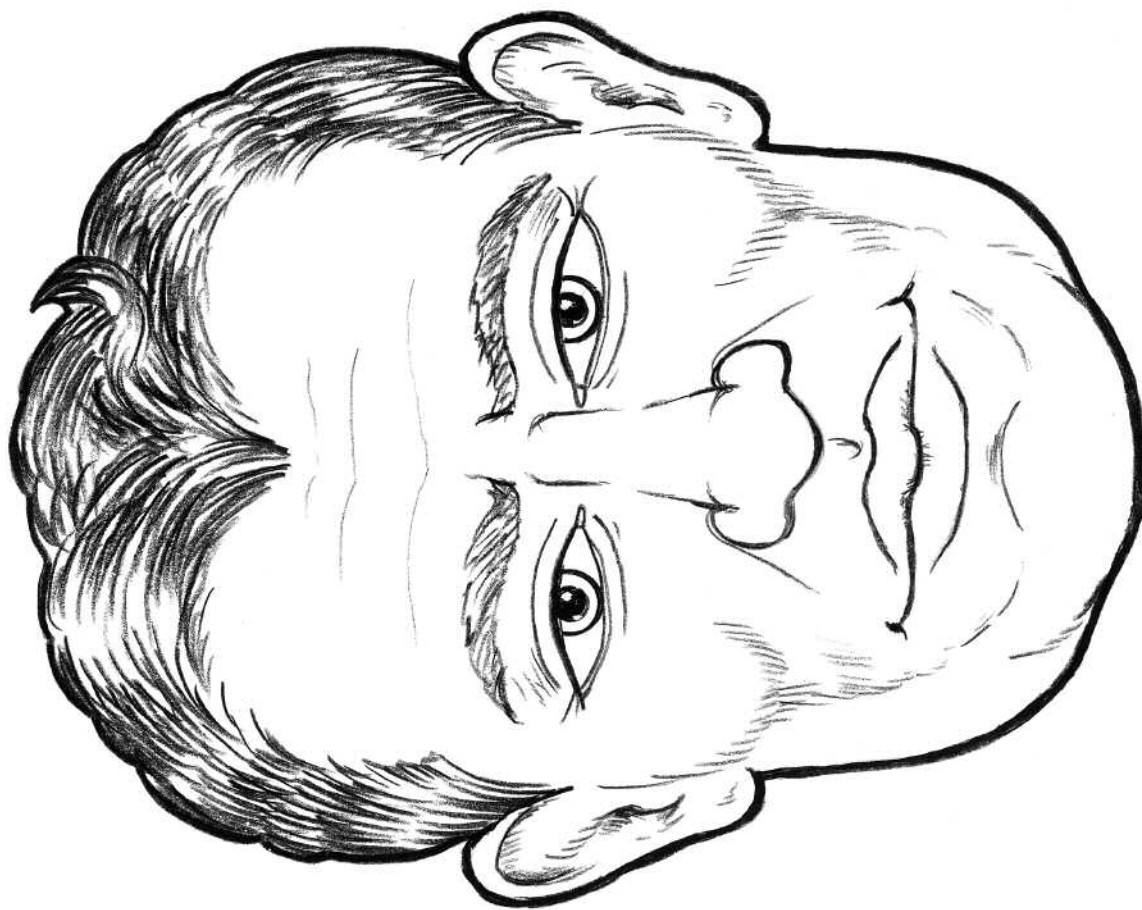
Fun Facts

- My Native American name, Wa-Tho-Huk, means “Bright Path.”
- In high school, I played football and ran track.
- I won two gold medals in the 1912 Olympics and was called “the greatest athlete in the world.”

In 1912, at the age of 25, Jim Thorpe won gold medals in the pentathlon and decathlon at the Olympics in Sweden. Upon returning to the United States, Thorpe was honored with a ticker-tape parade in New York City. The next year, newspaper reports claimed that Thorpe had been paid for playing minor league baseball, violating the strict rules of amateur status for the Olympics. The Amateur Athletic Union and the International Olympic Committee voted to revoke his gold medals and remove his name from the record books.

Thorpe went on to play professional baseball before moving into professional football. He helped form the American Professional Football Association (later to become the NFL) and served as its first president in 1920. Between 1920 and 1928, Thorpe played on six professional football teams and played 52 NFL games before retiring at the age of 41.

His professional sports career in the 1920s eventually earned him such awards as “Most Outstanding Athlete of the First Half of the 20th Century” and “Athlete of the Century” from ABC’s *Wide World of Sports*. In 1982, 29 years after his death, Thorpe’s Olympic titles were restored and his name was put back into the record books.



Gertrude Ederle

Fun Facts

- I won a gold and two bronze medals at the 1924 Olympics.
- I had to coat myself with lots of lanolin during my swim across the English Channel.
- As a result of ear damage that I got during my swim across the English Channel, I eventually became deaf.

At the age of 14, Gertrude “Trudy” Ederle demonstrated her long-distance swimming abilities by defeating 51 other women in a $3\frac{1}{2}$ -mile race. By the age of 17, she held 18 world swimming records and was a member of the U.S. Olympic swimming team. In the 1924 Olympics, she competed in all five swimming events that were open to women, winning a gold and two bronze medals. The following year, she swam from the Battery, in lower Manhattan, to Sandy Hook, New Jersey. She made the 21-mile swim in 7 hours 11 minutes, beating the men’s record. By that time, she already held 29 national and world records.

Ederle is most famous for being the first woman to swim across the English Channel. Her second attempt was successful, despite wind, rain, and heavy swells. She completed the trip in 14 hours 31 minutes, shattering the existing record, which had been set by a man, by nearly 2 hours.

Ederle was among the first female athletes to prove that women were neither physically inferior to men nor incapable of heavy physical activity. Her determination and hard work illustrated that women could achieve greatness in the sports arena.



Expectations for Celebrity Guests

You are cordially invited to attend a Roaring Twenties party. All celebrity guests attending the party should understand and follow this list of guest expectations.

1. When the music is playing, all celebrity guests will mingle with each other.
2. Use the masks, costumes, or props, in addition to the fun facts on *Notebook Handout 28: Roaring Twenties Guest List*, to determine the identity of each guest. Approach a guest and ask, “Are you (celebrity guest’s name)?” If you correctly identify the guest, proceed to Step 3. If not, move on to the next guest and ask again.
3. As you talk with each guest about his or her achievements, fill in the appropriate information on your guest list.
4. When you finish talking with one celebrity, find a new celebrity and repeat Steps 2 and 3.
5. If the music stops playing, stop talking and look at the party host (your teacher). The party host will select two of the “trend” groups to step into the middle of the dance floor. The music will play for about 30 seconds while the celebrities in the middle dance the Charleston. Anyone not dancing should clap, cheer, and shout encouragement to the dancers.
6. Once the dancing and applause stop, return to mingling. As you talk to different celebrities, repeat Steps 2 and 3. You need to meet at least one celebrity from each “trend” group: consumerism, transportation, mass media, women’s rights, the Jazz Age, literature and art, and sports heroes.